Loading operations at Visakhapatnam Port

*37. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inordinate delay in loading operations, particularly of iron ore meant for export to Japan, Sri Lanka and other foreign countries through Visakhapatnam Port, is resulting in huge loss of foreign exchange to M.M.T.C.; and

(b) if so, what action is being taken to avoid delay and to improve efficiency in loading operations at Visakhapatnam Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There were some problems in the month of August, 1992 in loading of iron ore vessels meant for export to Japan. A coordinated Action Plan was drawn for avoiding delay and improving efficiency for loading operations at Vizag Port. The position now is normal.

Law for two child norm

*38. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enact a law for strictly enforcing two child norm to arrest the over-growing population in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to set up the target of zero rate of growth of population in our country, if so, by what time;

(c) what other steps Government propose to take to create necessary awareness among the people on this front; and

(d) whether Government have achieved the target fixed during the Seventh Five Year Plan and during first year of the current plan?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The target is to attain Net Reproduction Rate of unity first.

(c) Programmes of information, Education and Communication through electronic media, print media, exhibitions, song & drama, and films are being intensified. Special emphasis is being laid on awareness generation and mobilising the community by strengthening ongoing schemes like Mahila Swasthya Sanghs and Link Women Scheme. Efforts are being made to create a national consensus in favour of the small family norm.

(d) An ANNEXURE indicating the family planning targets and achievements during the Seventh Five Year Plan and the first year of the current plan (1992-93 upto September, 1992) is enclosed. [*See* Appendix CLXV, ANNEXURE No. 4]

Decontrolling of Petroleum Sector

*39. DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRI SHANTI TYAGI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to decontrol the petroleum sector in the field of import of crude and petroleum products, refining, marketing and pricing etc.;

(b) whether Government have chalked out any plan to woo the private sector and multinational companies to boost domestic oil production;

(c) whether Government have cleared investment proposals received from a number of private companies, both Indian and foreign, for setting up of refineries in the country; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard

and what is the reaction of the private sector in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Under the Import and Export Policy, only crude oil and 8 other petroleum products are not de-canalised.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Four refineries in the private sector and the award of four exploration contracts to private sector companies have been cleared so far.

Extinction of tigers in Ranthambhore National Park

*40. MISS. SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poaching has already claimed nearly half the tigers in Ranthambhore National Park;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Conservation Scientists fear a virtual extinction of Tigers within the next 10 years, as per the newsitem entitled "Scientists fear Tigers extinction" which appeared in the Times of India, dated 10.9.92; and

(c) if so, what corrective steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) There has been some evidence of poaching in Ranthambhore, the extent of which is not yet known.

(b) and (c) The news item referred attributes the apprehension of extinction of Tiger to one scientist only. The efforts at conservation of tiger will continue taking note of all scientific data.

Forest Conservation Act

227. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 7 State Governments have submitted a Memorandum to the Prime Minister for immediate repeal of Forest Conservation Act and on matters relating to Central-State relations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) Representations have been received from various State/UT Governments for repeal/amendment of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 including matters relating to Centre State relations. After discussing the issue in various fora including the State Forest Ministers' Conference held during February, 1992, it has been decided to further decentralise and streamline examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Accordingly, Forest (Conservation) Rules, 1981 have been suitably amended on 21.5.1992 and revised consolidated guidelines for examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 have been issued on 25.10.92. Revised consolidated guidelines *inter alia* include delegation of powers to Regional Chief Conservator to finally decide proposals involving diversion of forest land upto 5 ha. excluding proposals in respect of regularisation of encroachments and mining and initial examination of all proposals involving diversion of forest land upto 20 ha.